

Appn No. 10/716,812
Amdt date July 27, 2007
Reply to Office action of April 27, 2007

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office action dated April 27, 2007, the examiner allowed claims 13-15 and 27-29. These claims remain in their allowed form, and applicant therefore submits that they remain allowable.

However, the examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 23, 25, 26 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Ventura, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,015,638), and rejected claims 1-9, 11, 12, 16-23, 25, 26 and 30-32 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly anticipated by Yoshida, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,949,317). In response, applicant has canceled claims 1, 11, 12, 23, 25 and 26 and has amended claims 2-5, 8, 16, 17 and 30-32 to depend from either allowed independent claim 13 or allowed independent claim 28. Remaining claims 6, 7, 9 and 18-22 depend from allowed claim 13. Accordingly, allowed independent claims 13, 15, 27 and 28, and all claims dependent therefrom, including claims 2-9, 16-22 and 29-32, are allowable.

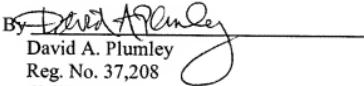
The examiner also rejected claims 3, 7, 11, 12, 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite. As noted above, applicant has canceled claims 11, 12, 25 and 26. However, applicant has amended claims 3 and 7 along the lines suggested by the examiner. Applicant therefore respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 2-9, 13-22 and 27-32 now remain pending in this application. By this amendment, applicant has amended claims 2-5, 7, 8, 16, 17 and 30-32 and canceled claims 1, 11, 12, 23, 25 and 26. The amendments find full support in the original specification, claims and drawings, no new matter is presented. In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicant submits that all of pending claims 2-9, 13-22 and 27-32 are in condition for allowance.

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Applicant therefore respectfully requests a timely indication of allowance. However, if there are any remaining issues that can be addressed by telephone, applicant invites the examiner to contact applicant's counsel at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
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